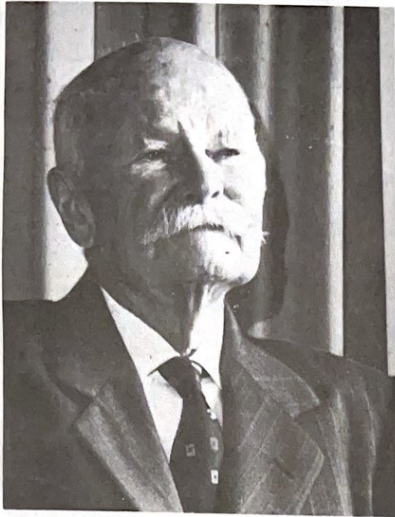


Farrell: merchant, civic leader, 'friend'



CHARLIE FARRELL
... age 98, shortly before his death

By WINNIE SHINN

No history of Camas would be complete without telling the story of the first registered voter here, Charles E. Farrell, whose death in 1967, 12 days before his 98th birthday, ended a long, active and influential association with this area, including his years as a merchant, as a longtime city councilman, as a property owner, a family patriarch, and "everybody's friend."

As a lad of 22, in 1891, he came to the small settlement of La Camas, population 300, leaving, with others of his large family, the drought-scorched fields of Kansas. (It was in Kansas that his family knew the grandfather of the late President Eisenhower.)

His father, Martin Farrell, born in Ireland, was naturalized in Massachusetts in 1856. His parents had 14 children, 9 sons and 5 daughters. Charlie was born Nov. 24, 1869, in Oxford, Ohio, where three of the children died of diphtheria.

Cows roamed the streets of the unincorporated community of La Camas when he arrived, but wooden sidewalks kept most of the mud from the women's long skirts.

The main industry, then, as now, was the paper mill, where the handsome newcomer worked for wages of \$1.50 a day, whether the day was 10 hours or 12 hours long, 7 days a week.

The paymaster rode the sternwheeler up the river from Portland carrying a satchel of gold and silver coins, with a revolver strapped to his leg, to pay the 78 workers, 60 men and 18 women. The mill, with two paper machines, one making newsprint, the other butcher paper, was entirely water-powered, so when the level of Lackamas Lake was low, production suffered.

Farrell worked in the mill for 12 years, then in 1903 purchased the Glenn Ranck General Store (built in 1887) at the corner of 4th and Birch, the present location of the Farrell and Eddy store, to start what has turned out to be 73 years of continuous Farrell family ownership.

Important to the success of the new venture, complementing Charlie's business acumen, were the talents and energy of his young wife, Ursula "Rose" Roffler Farrell, one of the first women to work fulltime in the paper mill, and one of Camas' first business women.

Ursula was such an unusual name in this community, that Hugh MacMaster said to her, "No one can pronounce Ursula — your name is Rose!" From that day on she was Rose to all her friends and family, and rose was her favorite color and flower. "Lady Ursula" was her favorite rose!

Married in Vancouver on

Nov. 30, 1901, by the Rev. Father Moens, "Rector of LaCamas," the couple had living quarters over their large store, which made it handy for Rose to be involved in the store, and also at home with the two Farrell sons, Glenn and Clayton.

Mrs. Farrell, of Swiss descent, loved quality things, and wanted to give the women of the town what they couldn't get elsewhere in the area. Besides groceries, the store handled yard goods, notions, shoes, gifts and millinery, her specialty.

Many, many modish hats came out of Rose's creative workshop, so many that it was necessary to hire a full-time trimmer from Portland.

Besides local sales, Mrs. Farrell produced hats for a millinery shop on the west side of Main Street in Vancouver, which she owned, and for "the millinery section of Bannan's Department Store in Oregon City, which was managed by Rose Farrell's pretty younger sister, Anna Roffler Eddy, wife of H.E. Eddy, supervisor of the sulfite department of the Crown Willamette Paper Company.

Groceries were a separate department of the large store. Glenn Farrell, the present owner, recalls going with Braz Barnett many times to deliver groceries by horse and wagon. They had their own stable nearby.

Will Fletcher, in charge of the grocery department, would telephone townspeople (who asked to be called) for their grocery orders. Customers lived as far away as the rock quarry and the lake area.

The Aeneas MacMaster store, which by that time was operated by the son, Hugh was a friendly competitor. Frequently, the two merchants would pool orders for sugar, flour, potatoes, etc., to get better prices by quantity purchase. Farmers would bring in their eggs and produce to barter at the stores, and eggs were sent to Portland when supply exceeded demand.

As the store prospered, Mrs. Farrell added lovely china, cut glass and linens. She made it a "beautiful place with wonderful things," oldtimers recall.

About 1915, the Farrells built an impressive 12-room home out in the country, east of town, cutting trees to get to the site. It is still impressive, located on N.E. lone, between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, though no

longer out of town!

After some 20 years in the business, in 1924, at the age of 55, Charlie Farrell replaced his building with the present structure, but the tenant for the next ten years was the J.C. Penney Company.

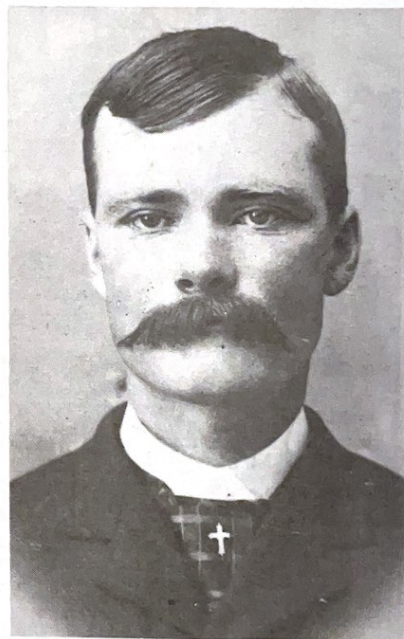
Mrs. Farrell, at the request of the women of Camas, continued her millinery in her home, where it flourished, because the local ladies appreciated the high style and fine workmanship available there.

"Rose could create anything, she even made silk lampshades," recalls Helen Drewfs Farrell, Glenn's wife. She explained that Rose Farrell was "forever young," that she read Women's Wear Daily, keeping up with the latest fashion trends, and had access to the best lines.

could have the pool table back" and moved into a small shop in the theater building. The move was necessary to satisfy the many requests of the local women for ready-to-wear as well as millinery. Needing a bookkeeper, Rose invited her sister to join her in the venture and Anna became a partner.

Naming the new shop was a challenge, but son Clayton, who was taking French in high school at the time, came up with "The Fashionette." The name denoted up-to-the-minute high fashion, and was copied by stores about the country.

In the next seven years, as Rose and Anna worked to give the public quality and style, they outgrew their surroundings again. So, when Robert Stoller, owner of Stoller Motors (now



CHARLIE FARRELL
... age 22

She claimed there was no such thing as a matronly hat! And was heard to remark that "hair may be a woman's crowning glory, but it should be topped by the proper hat!"

In 1928, when Charlie Farrell built a theater in downtown Camas, the millinery enterprise left the Farrell home "so the boys

Westlies), tore down the old hotel across the street, and built a new structure, Penney's moved from the Farrell Building to the Stoller Building, their present location, and The Fashionette expanded into the corner building, where it had all started.

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Charles Farrell...

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That was 1936. Shoes were added to the stock, and Charlie enjoyed selling them. Dress alterations were done in the balcony, and a knitting group also met there. Rose and Anna worked long hours, but still had time for cultural and family activities.

Glenn Farrell joined the organization in 1936, after several years with the First National Bank of Portland.

He has been with the store ever since. During the war years, Glenn not only did the bookwork for the store, but also was graveyard shift supervisor in the IBM facility of the Kaiser shipyard in Vancouver.

When the decision was made to handle menswear as well as women's clothing, it seemed advisable to change the name to Farrell and Eddy.

Clayton Farrell was associated with the store as a partner from 1946 until his death in 1969. Rose Farrell died in 1957; Charlie in 1967; and Anna Eddy in 1972. Like her sister Rose, Anna worked in the store she loved until she was over 80.

Charlie and Rose Farrell were quality people.

respected, trusted and admired. She was light of step, slim and trim, with a sense of humor and creative good taste. She could both read and write German script.

Charlie Farrell had a soft spot in his heart for everyone. Folks never forgot his kindness, goodness and trust. When

times were hard in Camas and Washougal, Charlie Farrell trusted them to pay him later. They always did.

The Farrell story continues in Camas with Glenn actively involved in the community and the store, and passing to his children and grandchildren the fine heritage of Charlie and Rose Farrell.